

“I say we blame it on the teachers...”

They’ve overstepped so many boundaries. I mean, there’s a lot that goes on within the confines of the classroom that the outside world just doesn’t get to see. So many hidden agendas. But today I’d like to pull back the curtain a bit. I want to give you a glimpse of my experience.

Let’s start with **Mrs. C. in 1st grade**. I lost my Grampa. Cried like a baby. I wasn’t a baby. I was 7!

Teachers shouldn’t hold any child above the others. But that day, she made me a priority

She held me. The way I needed to be held. She took me aside and brought me into the lunchroom with the other teachers. And they all held me. Tears in their eyes.

Let’s blame them.

I blame **Mrs. P in 6th grade English**. She was a spitfire. Animated to the point of annoyance. She asked me to read my poem out loud. OUT LOUD. In front of people. Really? How dare she push that boundary? I hated every minute of it. Until I didn’t. She’s the one who let me know I had a voice, even when I wanted to sink into the background.

Man, we should blame her.

Mr. M. was my 7th grade science teacher. My family couldn’t afford the group field trip at that time because of financial troubles. I was embarrassed. He worked behind the scenes to find the funds to make it happen for me. Quietly. Diligently. With none the wiser, I was able to attend one of the greatest middle school trips.

Let’s blame him as well,

Then there was **Mrs. P**. She was my **sophomore year English teacher**. She gave me a near failing grade in the first term. Me - a straight A student! She was known to be ruthless in her pursuit of education. I was ready to drop her class before I started. I tried to drop it after the D. She said no. I couldn’t stand her for it! But... she made me stay and lured me in with crazy ideas. She made me stay long enough to teach me to fall in love with reading. Love REALLY reading. And showed me the power of every word..

So yes, let’s blame her.

I also blame **Mr. M. my High school art teacher**. I wasn’t an artist. I was a wannabe. He took my unsteady hand and showed me the ability I had in my fingertips. I wasn’t any good. Really, I wasn’t. But he didn’t see me as an artist. He saw me as a person. This teacher. Saw. Me. As. A. Person. And gave me a place to express myself even though I wasn’t great at it.

Let’s blame him... blame him for letting me know that art doesn’t have to be perfect, or even beautiful, to be art.

And I blame **Mr. B. Senior year English**. He made us write in a daily journal. And we shared a lot in those journals. I didn’t think it was important. Until he shared with me a page from my high school boyfriend’s journal, a sweet entry about us. He gave it to me after he died. Mr. B. cried with me as I read it. So many teachers cried with me that year. Blame them all too...

In college there was **Mr. R**. He made us read books that were banned. The audacity! He showed us words that came from underrepresented worlds we didn’t even know existed. They told stories from hidden places. Horrible, beautiful, real places. With words that would turn our grandmas in their graves. But unearthed all voices that were silenced. He’s to blame for my craving to dig into the uncomfortable truths. Let’s blame him.

And now I can’t help but blame my kids’ teachers. The kindergarten teachers who held my baby’s hand when he was too anxious to let mine go. The middle school teachers who noticed classmates being hurtful and offered guidance and grace to help her persevere. The high school teachers who reach out when something feels amiss. Something beyond academics. Real life.

Yes, let’s blame the teachers. With all their scheming. All their hidden agendas. All for students. All for the kids. Their kids.

We must blame them for making us recognize ourselves as more than a scantron receipt of numbers. For making us believe we are more than a grade. For making us understand there are people out there who truly care. About us. About our kids.

Let’s blame teachers. For overstepping in all the best ways. For making us... who we are today. And hope they take this blame with the same honor as I hold it in my heart for them.

Thank you, Teach...for all I’ve learned about life that I might not have learned without you.”

I’ll blame the teachers ❤️